COMIC SHOP NEWS

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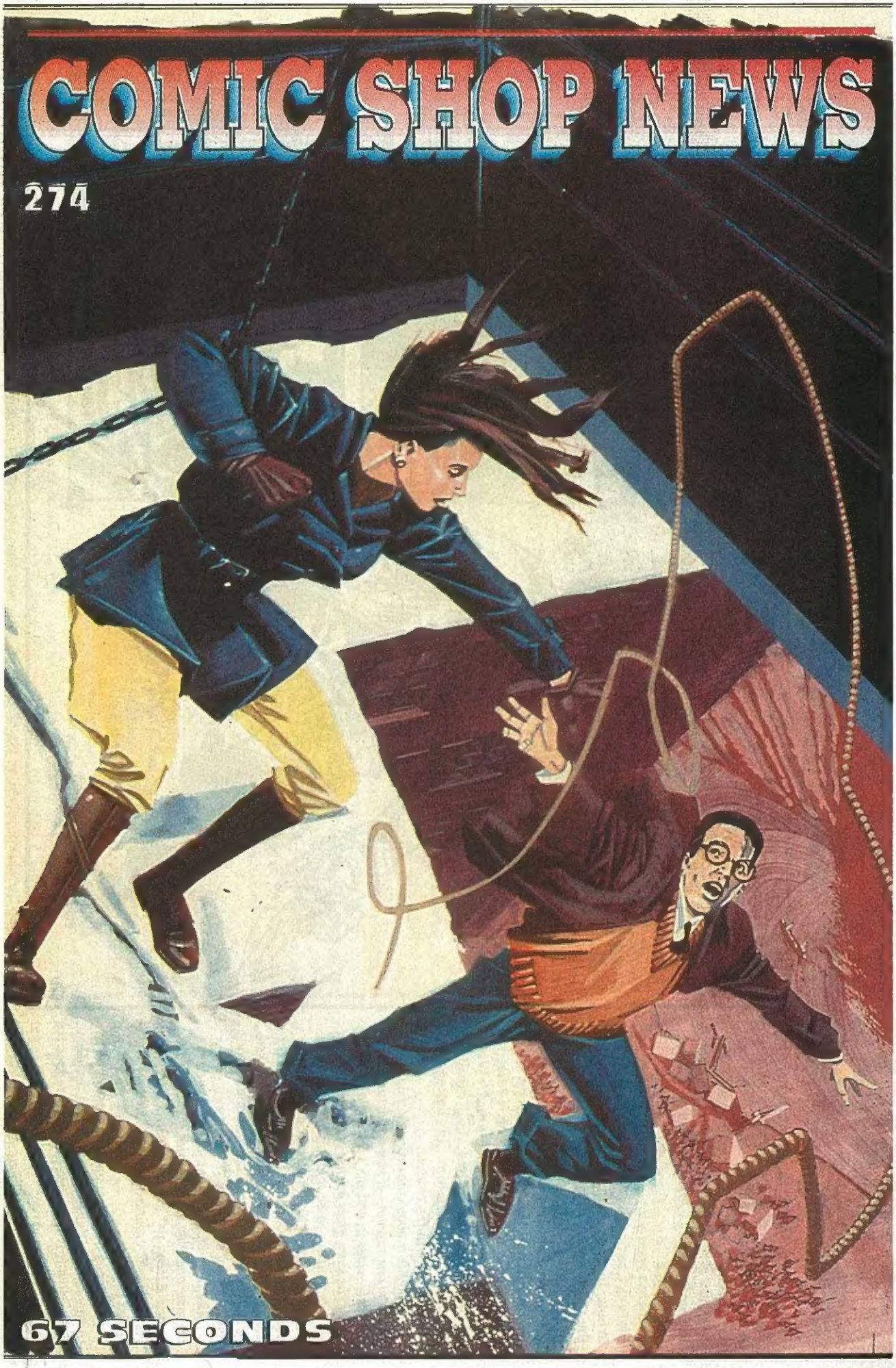

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Death's Head Heads Back to the Comic Shops

The first time Death's Head made his move on American comic shops, response was lackluster and the title went on hiatus after approximately a year of publication. When Death's Head returned early this year, though, the reaction was very different; the limited series proved to be so popular that Marvel was forced to go back to print with not only the first issue of the limited series, but the second issue as well. With response like that, it's no wonder that Death's Head is ready to tackle the US comics market on a monthly basis in a new ongoing monthly series.

Death's Head II picks up after the events occurring in the pages of Marvel's Warheads title; in the pages of ***Warheads #7***, Death's Head wrests control of the reality-warping Sapphire Lotus from the Warheads; once he returns to Earth with it, though, he finds that everyone wants to possess the Saphhire Lotus—and some villains will stop at nothing to get it. Soon, Death's Head's beautiful accomplice, Tuck, is kidnapped, and it's up to Wolverine, Cyclops, and the rest of the X-Men to help Death's Head free her.

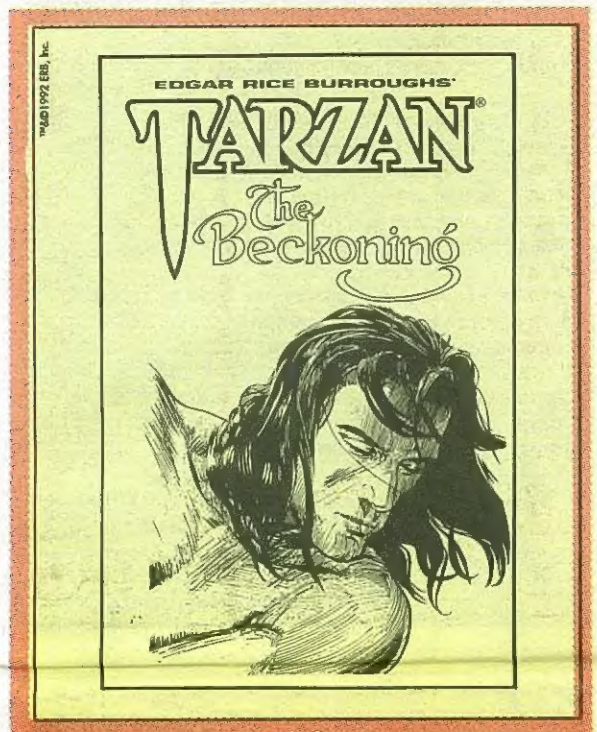
Death's Head II is written by Dan Abnett and illustrated by Liam Sharp; this is the same duo responsible for the hit ***Death's Head II*** limited series. The new ongoing ***Death's Head II #1,*** a $1.75 comic, is scheduled for October 15th release.

If one ***Death's Head*** title isn't enough for you, you'll be glad to hear that Death's Head will also star in a new limited series, ***Battletide.*** This series unites Death's Head and the assassin Killpower as a reluctant "tag team" on Colosseum, a world dedicated to warfare and battle. Among the other characters who find themselves transported to Colosseum are Wolverine, Captain America, the Incredible Hulk, Psylocke, Hercules, and Sabertooth. Battletide is written by Andy Lanning and Dan Abnett and illustrated by Geoff Senior, whose visual style is wowing fans of the Marvel UK title ***Hell's Angel.*** ***Battletide #1***, a $1.75 comic, is scheduled for October 29th release.

So what about that hard-to-find original ***Death's Head*** series from a couple of years back? Well, you won't have to haunt the back-issue racks to track down those hard-to-find books, because marvel's reprinting the entire series in ***The Incomplete Death's Head,*** a twelve-issue maxiseries. The series will also feature new pages linking the stories, as well as interviews and unpublished art. The first issue, a 48-page comic featuring a die-cut cardstock wraparound cover, is priced at $2.95; look for it on November 26th. Subsequent issues will be priced at $1.75.

Apparently, Death is only the beginning...at least insofar as a cyborg in the Marvel UK universe is concerned!

by WAYNE LEE



Tarzan Beckons For Tom Yeates

The contemporary Tarzan featured in Malibu Comics' kickoff Tarzan series is far removed from his African origins. This fall, however, Tarzan will find himself returning to his roots in a new seven-issue limited series, ***Tarzan: The Beckoning,*** produced by Tom Yeates and Henning Kure.

Tom Yeates, the co-creator and artist of the series, has been a Tarzan fan for decades. "This is something I've been working on in the back of my mind ever since I was in grade-school," Yeates said. "A lot of my research and life experiences have gone into the project... I first read Tarzan around 1969, and I've been researching ever since. So I have a little bit of experience with the character."

In ***Tarzan: The Beckoning,*** Yeates brings Tarzan back to the primal roots. "It's a story about the call of the wilderness. The basic theme is balancing the wild nature of not only Tarzan but life, with the more controlled 'civilized' nature, and the good and the bad that exists in both. I'm trying to present Tarzan as a character through which we can see the shortcomings of our culture," Yeates said. "Our concept of Tarzan includes Burroughs' concept of Tarzan. Since Burroughs died in 1950, the stories that took place after he died involved taking Tarzan beyond that... I'm not changing who Tarzan is, I'm just bringing him forward into this era."

Tarzan: The Beckoning brings Tarzan back to Africa in response to disturbing dreams of his origin. Once he arrives there, he and Jane join the war against the illegal ivory trade. The story features smugglers, poachers, a hired assassin, and the Spider Man—the African trickster god, that is, not the familiar web-spinning hero. The story will answer the question that has led to a great deal of fan speculation—namely, how did Tarzan gain perpetual youth?

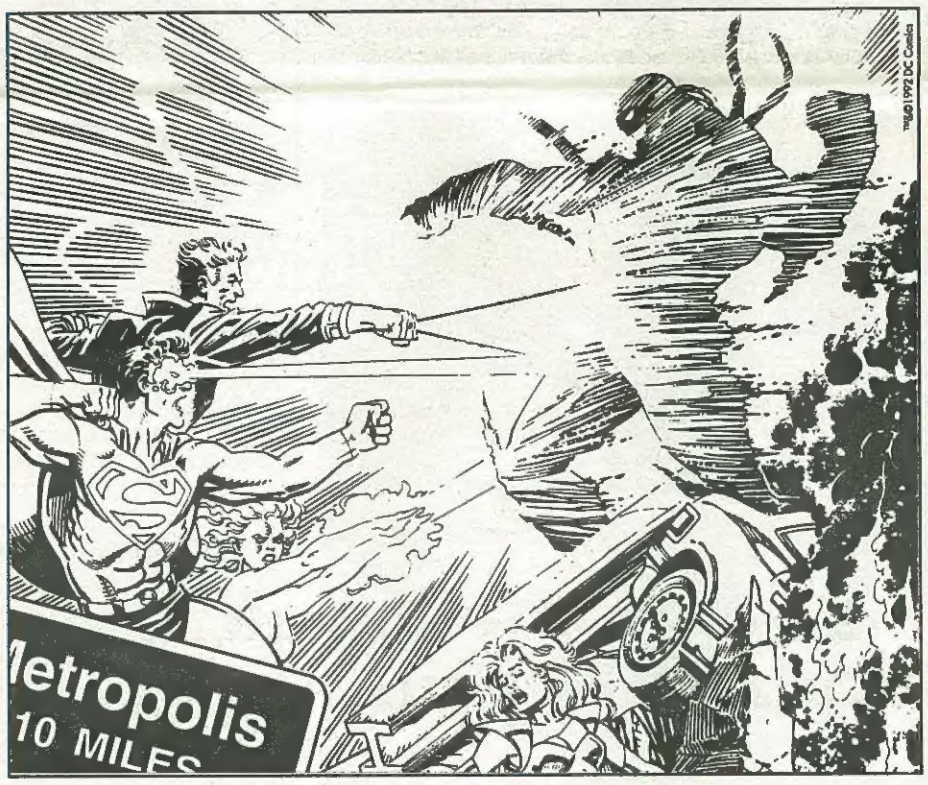
Tarzan: The Beckoning #1, the debut issue of a seven-issue full-color series, is scheduled for November release; each issue is priced at $2.50.

by ALEX KIRKLAND

There's Nothing Cryptic About Superman #75

CSN has told you that the impending arrival of a new character, Doomsday, was going to have some pretty devastating effects on Superman. DC has confirmed that Doomsday will live up to his name in the next few months, challenging Superman in the most brutal battle of his career... a battle that will result in the death of the Man of Steel.

Written and pencilled by Dan Jurgens and inked by Brett Breeding, ***Superman #75*** will die defending Metropolis from Doomsday's threat. DC will offer the book in two different editions. The standard $1.25 edition will feature the a



front cover by Jurgens and Breeding as well as a foldout inside back cover. The deluxe $2.50 collectors' set will feature a special computer art front cover by Eric Kachelhofer; a fold-out inside back cover; a poser of Superman's funeral featuring the hero surrounded by his friends and fellow heroes; Superman's obituary from the Daily Planet; a commemorative "postage stamp" honoring the Man of Steel; and black mourning armbands, made from black ribbon and featuring the Superman shield. Both editions are scheduled for November 19th release.

DC will also release a specially designed black Superman shirt, featuring a special "weeping S shield" logo. The $14.95 shirt is slated for November 12th release, allowing fans a week to prepare for the tragic event.

Fans who remember the incredible demand for ***Superman #50***, in which the Man of Steel proposed to Lois Lane, can understand why DC expects the press reaction to the death of Superman to be phenomenal. The national publicity should create an incredible demand for the landmark issue.

After Superman's death, the Superman family of titles will follow the post-Superman Metropolis in a nine-part storyline subtitled "Funeral For a Friend." In the aftermath of Superman's death, Supergirl moves to take his position in Metropolis, while Lex Luthor builds a hero's tomb for the fallen Superman. Fans who want to follow the entire story, before an after, should keep an eye out for the following:

"Doomsday"

(leading up to Superman's death)
Superman: Man of Steel #18
Justice League America #69
Superman #74
Adventures of Superman #497
Action Comics #684
Superman: Man of Steel #19
Superman #75

"Funeral For a Friend"

Justice League America #70
Adventures of Superman #498
Action Comics #685
Superman: Man of Steel #20
Superman #76
Adventures of Superman #499
Action Comics #686
Superman: Man of Steel #21
Superman #77

by WAYNE LEE

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"The Bird Is The Word!"

...and the bird, in this case, is a Robin! *Chuck Dixon,* the writer of various **Robin** miniseries as well as the monthly **Detective Comics** title, sends along the word that **'Detective #**s 652 and 653 tie in rather heavily with the **Robin III** miniseries coming in November. They feature the return of the Huntress, who impacts rather bigtime on Robin's upcoming storyline.' Since the word didn't get out at the time that stores were placing their comics orders, these issues could prove rather hard to find--so don't let 'em slip past you! **Detective #652** is scheduled for September 3rd release, while the second part of the storyline follows four weeks later.

If Only It Came With a Protective Cover...

Malibu Comics recently introduced its new super-team, The Protectors, in the premiere issue of their own series. Advance response to that new series was so strong that creators *R.A. Jones, Roland Mann,* and *Thomas Derenick* are confident that fans are going to want more information on the team, its heroes, and the world in which it operates ...and they're prepared to give it to them! This fall, Malibu will offer **The Protectors Handbook #1,** a $2.50 comic that features background info on the team, its members, and the series' talented creators. Malibu intends to offer additional handbooks as needed to keep readers informed. *Clarke Hawbaker,* whose work has been wowing fans of Marvel's **Nomad,** supplies the cover illustration for this premiere issue; look for it in October.

Dinosaurs Attack the Comics Racks

Dinosaurs, the Henson/Disney creation that has become a surprise TV hit, is about to become a comic book hit as well. Disney is starring the Sinclairs in a two-issue comics miniseries beginning in November; each 48-page prestige-format issue is priced at $2.95, much less than the standard price of a Disney prestige-format book. Disney has also lined up an impressive array of talent not normally associated with Disney books, including *Jackson Guice* and *Joe Staton,* to illustrate the series. **Dinosaurs #1,** a mid-November release, will feature two stories. In addition, **Dinosaurs** will also be featured in a comic book story in **Disney Adventures #27,** a November release priced at $1.95. Who says that dinosaurs are extinct?...

A Time Of Changes

For longer than most fans have read comics, *Dick Giordano* has been a guiding editorial force at DC Comics. Well, Giordano hasn't left the company—but he knows that his retirement is approaching in a few years, so he and DC have begun the implement some changes now that will pave the way for Giordano's departure. The editorial management of DC's Vertigo line, their Experimental Projects (including Piranha), and the DC Universe titles is being handled by the editors and group editors associated with those lines, giving them greater autonomy and editorial control. Giordano will concentrate his efforts on the overall editorial quality of the DC titles ; in addition, he'll serve as editor for projects that fall outside those three lines.

"These changes are taking place at my request," Giordano said. "It is my hope to conclude my long career in comics at DC, but not for several more years... I want to spend the next stage of my career helping the content of DC Comics reach the level our readers and potential readers want."

Neal Pozner has been promoted to the head of Creative Affairs, overseeing the newly-formed Creative Affairs department. Creative Affairs will help develop new talent, work with other DC departments, and build relationships with freelance creators.

Paul Levitz, Executive Vice President of DC, will become more involved with the daily management of the editorial process at the company. Levitz will work closely with Giordano and DC's group editors to improve the company's editorial process, competitiveness, and quality.

DC has also announced that *Terri Cunningham* has been promoted to the position of Managing Editor of DC Comics. "This new position allows me to spend more time with the aspects of my job I have always felt most rewarding, such as interaction with editors and creative talent," Cunningham said. "Of particular challenge will b e my greater involvement with relations between DC and the freelance community, identifying situations and solving problems before they become issues."

2099, Give Or Take Two Weeks

Comic Shops News received a *large* number of calls from readers who noticed that **Spider-Man 2099 #1**, listed as shipping on September 3rd, didn't make it on that date. Well, we were as surprised as you were when it didn't show up, so we called Marvel's Director of Sales *Lou Bank* to find out just what was going on. He tells us that the problem was the enormity of the demand for the book; normally that isn't considered a problem in the publishing business—but in this case, the very large print run required extra time to apply the foil embossing to all those **Spider-Man 2099** covers. As a result, Marvel has pushed the publication back to September 17th, which means that it should be on the stands even as you read this. Marvel doesn't anticipate further delays for the other **2099** titles, since they're working ahead to allow for the extra production time.

Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here!

Innovation Comics' **Vampire Lestat** was a hit with *Anne Rice* fans because the comics adaptation so faithfully conveyed the feel of the original novel. Alas, fans found that the **Queen of the Damned** series didn't manage to live up to the promise of the Vampire Lestat adaptation, either in terms of art or story—and Innovation agreed!

"The **Queen of the Damned #1** was one of our best-selling first issues ever, but we didn't think it quite measured up to *Faye Perozich* and *Daerick Gross*'s work on **Anne Rice's The Vampire Lestat,**" Innovation managing editor *David Campiti* said. "so Anne offered to help with character guidelines and more of her personal involvement. After we reviewed dozens of samples, Anne selected Brazilian painter *O.J. Cariello.*"

That still left Innovation in search of a writer, though—until they found that the same writer responsible for **Vampire Lestat** was available. "Imagine our surprise to discover that *Faye Perozich* was available to return to Innovation, to adapt and edit **Queen of the Damned** for us, as of the fourth issue."

Ironically, this reunites Perozich with artist *Daerick Gross,* who is supplying the cover paintings for the adaptation. "It's been a kick coming back to Anne Rice," Gross said, "but it's almost as though I've never left. I painted the second issue of **Interview With the Vampire** and helped on the interiors of the second issue of **Queen of the Damned,** b ut being in the cover spot of **Queen** is where I want to be at this point in my career."

Queen of the Damned #4, a 32-page $2.50 comic, is scheduled for late September release.

A Whole Flock o' Hawks

In the current "Flight's End" storyline in **Hawkworld,** Katar and Shayera have fallen out of favor with the U.S. government and find themselves wanted by the law. So who do you call in to capture Hawkman and Hawkwoman? None other that Hawkman and Hawkgirl, that's who. The original Hawkman and Hawkgirl, that is, who are determined to restore the dignity of the Hawk name by capturing the fugitives. *John Ostrander* and *Jan Duursema* present the confrontation in **Hawkworld #29,** an October 15th release.

The Moore The Merrier At Image

Ever since the first announcements of Image Comics' formation, some readers have pointed out that the talents who created Image Comics were primarily artists, not writers. Well, that may be true, but it'll be a little more difficult to peghole Image as an artist's company after this December—because that's when *Alan Moore,* acclaimed author of **From Hell** and **Watchmen,** makes one of his rare forays into the realm of superheroes to write a full-length story about the origin of Spawn's costume and his trip through Hell. It'll be an easy book to spot: the cover features Spawn in a pose that'll be very familiar to anyone who ever saw the cover to *Todd McFarlane's* **Spider-Man #1.** Additionally, *Frank Miller* will contribute a centerspread pullout poster. "This is a special issue that contain's the big 3M's of comics," Todd McFarlane said. "You can see why **Spawn** is definitely here to stay!" **Spawn #8,** a $1.95 comic, is scheduled for December release.

Zero Hour Approaches

Jerry Ordway, the popular artist-writer who is a part of the Superman family creative team, has moved into a new universe—the Image Universe, that is. Ordway will be penciling a new mini-series for Image Comics entitled **Wildstar: Sky Zero;** the series is written and inked by *Al Gordon,* who has inked virtually every DC creator at one tome or another. Gordon is also writing the new **Timberwolf** series for DC. **Wildstar: Sky Zero** is scheduled for early '93 release.

Stroman Joins the Tribe

Larry Stroman first caught the eye of art fans with his work on **Alien Legion** years ago, since then, he has gone on to become the fan favorite artist of **X-Factor** and the new DC series **Darkstars** (for which he has illustrated the first two issues). Stroman has left Marvel and DC for a new home beginning in early '93. Image Comics. Stroman and Todd Johnson are creating a new series, **Tribe,** that is slated to begin early next year.

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Judge Dredd's Even More Upstanding In Statue Format

There's never been any doubt that Judge Dredd's one of the most upstanding inhabitants of Mega-City One, but this November, he'll be upstanding on the shelves of comics fans' homes everywhere. That's when Fleetway/Quality is offering its first **Judge Dredd Statue,** a dynamic sculpture designed by *Janine Bennett*. Cast in high-quality tooling grade polyurethane resin, the statue is shipped in seven pieces; put 'em together and you have the gun-wielding Dredd in all his grim glory. The Judge Dredd Statue is priced at $49.95 and will be manufactured in limited quantities, so be sure to let your local comic shop know that you're interested—and tell 'em that **CSN** sent you, okay?...

For fans who'd like to prove that they support their local Mega-City Judges, there's the handy Judge Dredd metal key ring, featuring a facsimile of Dredd's badge. This very visible 1" badge is attached to a sturdy metal key ring, so that you'll never have to dread searching for your keys again. The **Judge Dredd Key ring** is priced at $7.95.

Parody Press Gets Funky...

Tom Batiuk's **Funky Winkerbean** has been, for quite a few years now, the best comic strip high-school-oriented produced. Alas, **Funky Winkerbean** collections are all too few, and the strip isn't available across the country—which is why we were very glad to hear that Parody Press is collecting several months' worth of **Funky Winkerbean** (along with an equally large helping of *Greg Evans'* **Luann)** in a 64-page comic book entitled, appropriately enough, **Funky Winkerbean/Luann Double Feature Special.** According to Parody Press, "The strips are current, and are printed in perfect continuity. There's even full Sunday panels reprinted as well!" This double-length comic is designed as a "flip-book" that allows each comic strip to be cover-featured. Look for the $2.95 comic in October.

Spider-Man Gets the Spirit

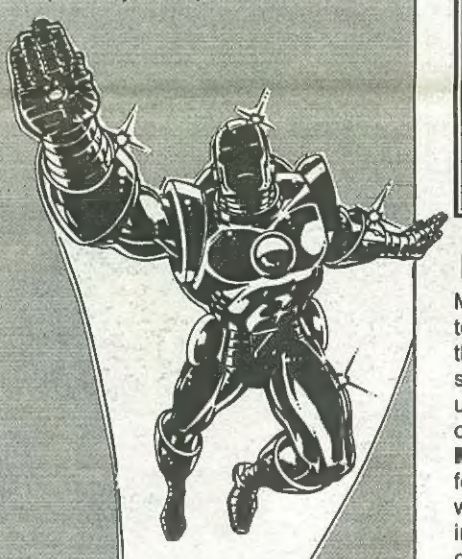
Spirits of Vengeance, the multi-book crossover series that began in Marvel's **Ghost Rider** earlier this summer and continued into a series of horror-oriented series premieres, extends its reach to include a surprising co-star later this summer when Spider-Man gets caught up in the Ghost Rider-based storyline. In a four-parter subtitled "Spirits of Venom," Spidey, Ghost Rider, and John Blaze join forces to stop Venom from exacting vengeance upon Hag and Troll. Before it's all over, though, they're glad to have Venom on their side. The Demogoblin and Spidey's evil doppelganger are also involved in the *Howard Mackie*-written storyline, which kicks off in **Web of Spider-Man #95** (an October 8th release) featuring art by *Alex Saviuk* and continues into **Spirits of Vengeance #5** (an October 29th release) with art by *Adam Kubert* and *Bill Reinhold*.

Looking Forward to the Past

Comics collecting can be a pretty expensive hobby, especially for fans who'd like to accumulate a collection of key titles introducing popular characters. Over the next couple of months, Marvel fans will have an opportunity to enjoy a variety of classic (and expensive) Marvel comics of the past without paying big bucks for the privilege.

October 15th brings **Amazing Spider-Man #1,** a Marvel Milestone edition reprinting of the web-spinner's first self-titled comic. This $2.95 edition will be followed a month later by **Marvel Masterworks #22,** a 256-page hardcover reprinting **Amazing Spider-Man #**s 41-50 and **Amazing Spider-Man Annual #3**. A week after that, Marvel will reprint **Amazing Spider-Man #129** in a $2.95 Milestone edition; this landmark Spidey issue features the first appearance of the Punisher.

If you're wondering if Marvel has plans to reprint any non-Spider-Man books, the answer is most certainly yes. **The Savage Return of Dracula,** a 48-page comic scheduled for November 5th release, reprints **Tomb of Dracula #**s 1 & 2 in one 48-page $2 comic. On November 19th, **The Wedding of Dracula** collects the storyline from **Tomb of Dracula #**s 30 & 45-46 in another $2 comic. This means that Marvel will have two 48-page Dracula collections on the stands by the time the new film release of **Bram Stoker's Dracula** reaches the big screen.



You want some more superheroes—and super-villains? Well, how about **Iron Man #55,** a $2.95 Marvel Milestone edition reprinting the first appearance of Thanos; you can pick it up on November 5th. On November 17th, Sabretooth fans can latch onto the Marvel Milestone edition of **Iron Fist #14,** featuring the savage one's debut. Dr. Doom's first appearance in **Fantastic Four #5** is being reprinted in its own $2.95 Marvel Milestone edition on November 26th. Now everyone can afford what made the Marvel Age of comics so popular from the very beginning!...

Batman Is the Predator In Prey

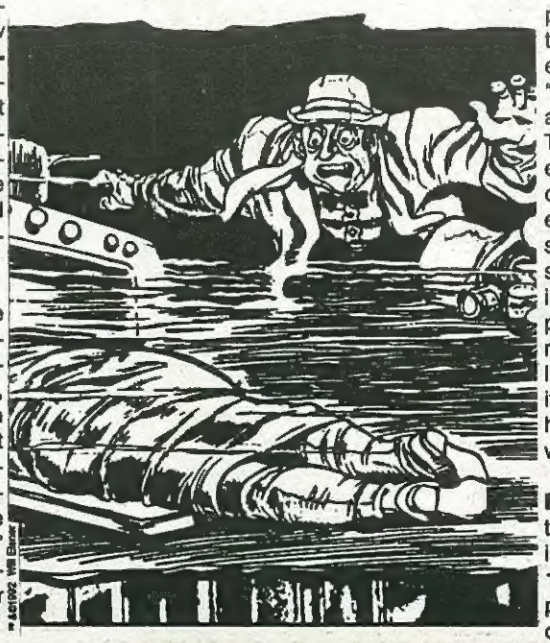
Doug Moench and *Paul Gulacy* are currently wowing 'em in the pages of their **James Bond 007** miniseries for Dark Horse Comics; a couple of years ago, though, their story-arc in the pages of **Legends of the Dark Knight #**s 11-15 was generating just as much excitement. This October, DC will collect that story arc into a 136-page trade paperback entitled **Prey.** The volume chronicles Batman's first confrontation with Dr. Hugo Strange; it also presents the origin of the Batmobile and the Bat-Signal. Catwoman also makes an appearance in the storyline, which should interest all of you Cat-fans out there. **Batman: Prey**, a $12.95 trade paperback with a new cover by *Paul Gulacy*, is scheduled for October 15th release

Blood Brothers?...

Morbius won't be the only Marvel super-character with a taste for blood—at least, not for long; the villainous Basilisk, who debuts this fall, also shares Morbius' arterial affinity, it seems. It's natural, therefore, Morbius and Basilisk should cross paths—and that's just what happens in **Morbius #5**. Unfortunately, it's not a good time for Morbius to confront anyone; that's the issue in which he injects himself with Spider-Man's blood in an attempt to cure himself, resulting in dire consequences. New York probably wishes Morbius was back, though; while he feeds only on the blood of the guilty, the Basilisk has no such qualms. **Morbius #5** is written by *Len Kaminski* and illustrated by *Ron Wagner* and *Mike Witherby*; look for it on November 19th.

Eisner Explores Uncivil Wars in Mortal Combat

In June, Kitchen Sink Press released the first segment of a new *Will Eisner* graphic novel, **Invisible People**, in a stand-alone comic-sized format to ensure that it could be enjoyed by fans on a budget. The second part of this graphic novel was recently released; the third and final installment, entitled **Mortal Combat**, is slated for October publication.



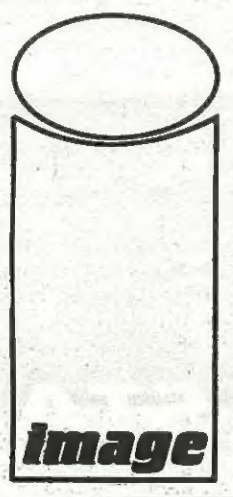
Mortal Combat deals with three characters: Hilda, a 40-year-old unmarried woman; Herman, a 50-year-old unmarried man; and Yetta, Herman's mother. When Herman meets Hilda, romance ensues—but it's not a romance that Yetta approves of, nor is it one that she intends to accept without a fight. The 32-page tale chronicles the "war" between Yetta and Hilda over Herman—who has little influence over the outcome of this struggle.

Like its two predecessors, **Mortal Combat** deals with the lives of the everyday people who are so often overlooked in their day-to-day existence. "From the earliest days of my youth," Eisner said, "I have been bemused by the anonymity of the people around me. The indifference of people to each other in these crowded places seemed dichotomous to the commonly accepted idea that cities were created for safety. The more time I spent on the street, the more I became aware of the invisibility of the people who streamed past me. I grew up accepting this as a normal phenomenon of metropolitan life. Only years later did the cruelty of it astonish me and make me aware of how often we accept invisibility as a way to deal with urban danger."

Mortal Combat, a $3.95 high-quality comic with heavy cardstock covers, is scheduled for October release. In 1993, Kitchen Sink will collect all three parts of **Invisible People** into hardcover and softcover editions.

Adding to the Image

If you've wondered what was going to happen with various Image titles once the current miniseries were completed, you can rest easy. *Erik Larsen* has announced that his **Savage Dragon** miniseries will lead to a new **Savage Dragon** ongoing comic in 1993. *Jim Lee*'s **WildCATs** will be followed by a new Lee title, **Stormwatch,** next year. *Jim Valentino*'s **Shadowhawk** will be followed by **The Others (Shadowhawk #1** featured a preview of **The Others**, in case the name sounds familiar) in '93. *Rob Liefeld* will join with *Richard Horie* and *Eric Stephenson* to create a new **Youngblood: Battlezone** book that offers a behind-the-scenes look at Younglood's weapons, equipment, and transport. And finally, *Sam Kieth, Jim Lee*, and *Rob Liefeld* will all contribute to Image's new black-and-white anthology series **Darker Image**; Lee's new strip is Deathblow, Liefeld's is Bloodwulf, and Kieth's is The Maxx. Look for it next year.



A 67 Seconds Conversation

Talking With James Robinson About His New Graphic Novel

We've all heard the cliché that, when a man's is threatened by death, his life flashes before his eyes. James Robinson's ***67 Seconds*** offers a decidedly different take on this old truism, though: it's not the narrator's life that is threatened, but that of his partner, an obsessively driven reporter with whom the photographer narrator has fallen in love. As he tries to save her in the narrow 67 second interval in which he must accomplish his rescue (and there you have the source of the title), we see, through flashbacks, his memories of their adventures together...and the love that each character feels for the other.

A brief description of ***67 Seconds*** just doesn't do the work justice, though. The graphic novel is packed with science fictional concepts, all clothed in a real-world setting; there are dozens of throwaway concepts in here that could have become fully-fleshed graphic novels in their own right.

"The book was something that I actually planned as a kind of a sequel to ***London's Dark,*** my first work," Robinson said. "There are some projects that you do primarily for the money or the exposure, and there are those that are more personal; this was the latter.

"I had the idea for this immediately after ***London's Dark,*** but it took a while to pull everything together. Finding a publisher for ***67 Seconds*** was hard; I originally conceived it for Victor Gollancz, who was soliciting material from a variety of creators. They weren't sure what they wanted at the time, though, so they passed on it. Then I took it to Piranha Press; Mark Nevelow liked it, but it wasn't the sort of thing he was looking for under the Piranha imprint. I really have to praise Carl Potts at Epic for taking it on; I have to thank him for staying with it. When Carl gets behind a project, he stands by it all the way, no matter how long it takes."

67 Seconds is illustrated by Steve Yeowell, a British artist who first drew critical acclaim here in America for his work on the offbeat superhero series ***Zenith*** (available in America in a series of trade paperbacks). "Steve and I have known each other for quite a while through the SSI—the Society of Strip Illustrators," Robinson said. "It's almost a rite of passage, it seems; virtually every British professional passes through those doors at one point in their career. When Steve was living close to London, he used to go in fairly regularly, and so did it, so we got to be friends.

"Originally, ***67 Seconds*** was to have been illustrated by the Pander Bros.; that didn't come about, though, so I turned to Steve. Initially, he was too busy with ***Zenith;*** he had so much to do that he just couldn't fit ***67 Seconds*** into his schedule. As Carl and I kept searching for an appropriate artist, though, Steve finished up ***Zenith*** and became available; thankfully, he was interested in doing the book, thank goodness."

While ***67 Seconds*** is the first collaboration between Robinson and Yeowell that will be seen by a large number of fans, it isn't actually their first project together. "At the same time I was writing ***67 Seconds,*** I did a graphic novel for the British magazine ***Revolver,*** a story called *Mystery Tour;* Steve did the first twelve pages of that project before Revolver went under. That set us up to work with each other; that was another factor in our working on ***67 Seconds.***

"I tried to construct a story that relied on both words and pictures. I was afraid I was overwriting initially; when I got the artwork, I edited back a little bit—and that's always a good thing—but I tried to keep a balance between action and dialogue. The layout you see, as well as the finished art, is all Steve's work. It's fabulous art; I'm not sure what ***Sebastian O*** [Yeowell's work with Grant Morrison, scheduled for publication under DC's Vertigo imprint in 1993] is like, but I think Steve will really have to stretch to surpass his work here.

"Steve uses the larger graphic novel format very well here; he makes use of the higher quality format to build visual drama. I think he'd be the first to admit that he's very influenced by Alex Toth, one of the great illustrators, as well as some of the British illustrators, such as John M. Burns—Burns hasn't done much here in America, but he's one of the "grand old men" of British comics. He's undergone quite a renaissance since he's discovered the older craftsmen of the industry; he's become a really great technician as well as a really great illustrator and storyteller."

Robinson is British, as is Yeowell; ironically, however, by the time the two finally began working together on ***67 Seconds,*** Robinson had relocated to America. "I did ***London's Dark*** in England," Robinson said. "Then I spoke with Matt Wagner about doing ***Grendel Tales***, and I came to America; everything else I've done has been written here in America. Steve came out and spent two weeks with me, since the other project was set in L.A., and we discussed ***67 Seconds***, deciding how we would approach it and who would do what. We actually worked with me here and Steve in England, though." •

67 Seconds is certainly packed with a variety of background concepts that could easily support other stories—but that doesn't mean that Robinson intends to write those stories. "I don't actually have any plans to return to the world I've created in ***67 Seconds,***" he said. "I created the setting and its history in order to help tell my story. The fact that you liked that setting means that it's done its purpose; if I went back to it, perhaps readers would say 'that's more than enough.' I think it's best to quit while I'm ahead; I don't really have another story that I want to tell in that world right now."

Without giving away the ending of the graphic novel, it's certainly fair to say that it's a surprising and provocative conclusion. "I was a bit concerned at one point that the ending of the story might be a problem," Robinson said, "but I was encouraged to go with my initial feelings by Carl and by Marc McLaurin, my editor on the book. They gave me a great deal of freedom, offering advice and criticism when it was needed but letting me tell my story my way.'

Since Marvel has earned its reputation on its superhero comics, many fans seem to be unaware that Marvel—and in particular, Epic Comics—has offered a number of experimental and innovative non-superhero works; ***67 Seconds*** certainly falls into that category. "Marvel is doing a lot more than just superheroes now; there's ***Sam & Max***, and ***Tales From the Heart***, and books like ***67 Seconds*** that show that Marvel is interested in expanding their market."

Fans who enjoy ***67 Seconds*** will be able to find a lot more of Robinson's work in their local comic shops in the future. "I'm doing one of the new Clive Barker titles, ***Ecto-Kid***, for Marvel, as well as a ***Tales of Suspense*** graphic novel featuring Captain America and Iron Man," he said, " and I've written Dark Horse's final Terminator series. For DC, I'm doing ***The Golden Age***, a miniseries with Paul Smith; I'm also writing ***The Vigilante***, a four-issue miniseries with Tony Salmons —this is the WesternVigilante. Tony's doing this in a real Toth-meets-Kirby style that looks fabulous. I also have a few other projects in development with DC, but it's too early to talk about them."

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Give & Take

by Cliff Biggers & Brett Brooks

Once again, Cliff Biggers (in plain type) and *Brett Brooks (in italic type)* take a look at a few choice comics scheduled for release in the next few weeks. Publishers interested in having their books considered for review should send copies to *CSN Give & Take, 2339 Milstead Circle, Marietta GA 30066.* We'd prefer receiving copies of the books at least thirty days before they're scheduled to reach comic shops. Enough business—now let's talk comics...

If you take the graphic novel *67 Seconds* and strip it down to just the real-time narrative, you'd be left with a suspenseful fourteen-page short story that would be an enjoyable, albeit brief, bit of entertainment. When you add the complex, interwoven tapestry of flashbacks and memories that writer James Robinson weaves into his brief real-time story, the end result is a compelling graphic novel that deserves to be savored—although the story certainly tempts the reader to rush through it as quickly as narrator Brian Fellowes clambers across the rooftops in the real-time portion of the tale.

67 Seconds is a rarity in comics: a story set in a meticulously-conceived near future that serves as a component of the story rather than its raison d'etre. Comics are high-concept; usually, when a writer creates a world as intriguing as this, that world and its history becomes the star, and every character takes on supporting-cast status. Not here, though; Robinson tantalizes the reader with fascinating glimpses of the world in which the story is set.

The world in which 67 Seconds is set is so intricate it is actually surprising that you aren't more caught up in it—a credit to Robinson's writing abilities. Robinson creates characters who overshadow the world around them, and their interactions with one another are the heart of the story. You can't help but notice the world that the characters live in, and the differences that it has to our own—or to any other comic reality for that matter—but that fact sort of sneaks up on you; by the time you realize that they are living in an intricate future world, you are so interested in what will happen between them that the world becomes nothing more than a setting.

The surface story is straightforward: reporter Emily Bougue is trapped on an enormous airship with a deadly war criminal she has unmasked; her photographer assistant, Brian Fellowes, has a scant 67 seconds to grab onto the loose mooring line before the airship drifts out of reach and Emily is beyond help.

In that 67 seconds, though, Fellowes presents a semi-stream-of-consciousness look back at the relationship between Bougue and Fellowes—a relationship built on professional respect, affected brusqueness, and growing (but unrequited) love. And that relationship is the star of the graphic novel. It's a wonderful story of personalities and emotions, a story populated by very believable characters in a very believable science-fictional world.

I agree that the story is wonderful, and with most of the other statements that you make, with one small exception: I don't feel the love is unrequited. Emily Bougue is presented as a

AND THIS ONE.
AND THESE... ALL OF THEM STRUCK DOWN BY FRIEDMAN'S FOUL PLAGUES.
WHEN DID THIS BEGIN? THE GASES AND GERMS?
WHEN WE STARTED WINNING.

very strong, independent woman, and she feels that a degree of aloofness must accompany her if she is going to make a name for herself in her field. That means she comes across as very cold—but Robinson is very careful to show that she has an increasing fondness for Brian, a fondness that eventually turns to love (finally realized I feel when Brian is about to die of pneumonia). The relationship is very believable; there is no storybook or fairytale here, but rather a strong, honest relationship that is built over time. Emily may appear cold, but she loves Brian very much.

Artist Steve Yeowell helps bring ***67 Seconds*** to life, and he does so by understating the science-fictional elements and focusing instead on the characters. Anyone casually flipping through ***67 Seconds*** would probably fail to realize that this story took place in a carefully-constructed near future; instead, they'd see the dynamic tension of Fellowes' frantic attempts to aid Bougue. Yeowell's art job is reminiscent of some of that of the best Japanese manga; it sets a pace that challenges the reader to race forward to the end, while the story urges him to slow down and savor every panel.

*I was a fan of Yeowell's work on **Zenith** because he could make this superhero living in a world of problems seem so real; much the same thing applies to his work on **67 Seconds**. As you've stated, the first thing you see when you look at this book isn't some science-fiction world, instead you see a world that is very close to our own, filled with many of the same problems; like Robinson's writing, Yeowell is able to create a natural and believable world that has real looking people living in it. No one is unnatural in the way that they look, and could easily blend into a crowd—which in some ways becomes an intricate part of the story. Yeowell's ability to understate the word and the characters makes them that much stronger.*

67 Seconds is a rarity: a graphic novel that *deserves* the graphic novel format.

Sometimes a supporting character just proves to be more popular than the main character of a story. This is particularly true for Kato, from the pages of the Green Hornet. The Green Hornet has always been a rather dry hero—entertaining yes, but always just a little too straightforward for my taste. Kato, on the other hand, is more exciting; he has that underlying sense of the foreign that draws you in—that mystery you want to explore and experience. There's never been a problem with Kato being in the Green Hornet...but he works even better on his own.

Kato II *is the second mini-series from Now comics to feature the Green Hornet's sidekick. Mike Baron and Val Mayerick have teamed up to once again bring you this adventure filled with martial arts mayhem. I think that the best way to describe Kato is to compare it to one of the many martial arts movies in terms of action and excitement—there are lots of fight scenes were people get hit a lot, and practically every character studies some martial art—but for this book, you get to add a plot. Basically, a snotty, racist-who-thinks-he-isn't rock star has a price on his head, and they hire Kato to take care of him for the rest of the tour. Kato says yes, and violence ensues.*

DOOMSDAY
IS COMING
FOR SUPERMAN!
THIS TIME THE NEVER-ENDING BATTLE ENDS!
SUPERMAN Triangle Numbers 1992 45 thru 1993 2 MAN OF STEEL #18 thru SUPERMAN #75!
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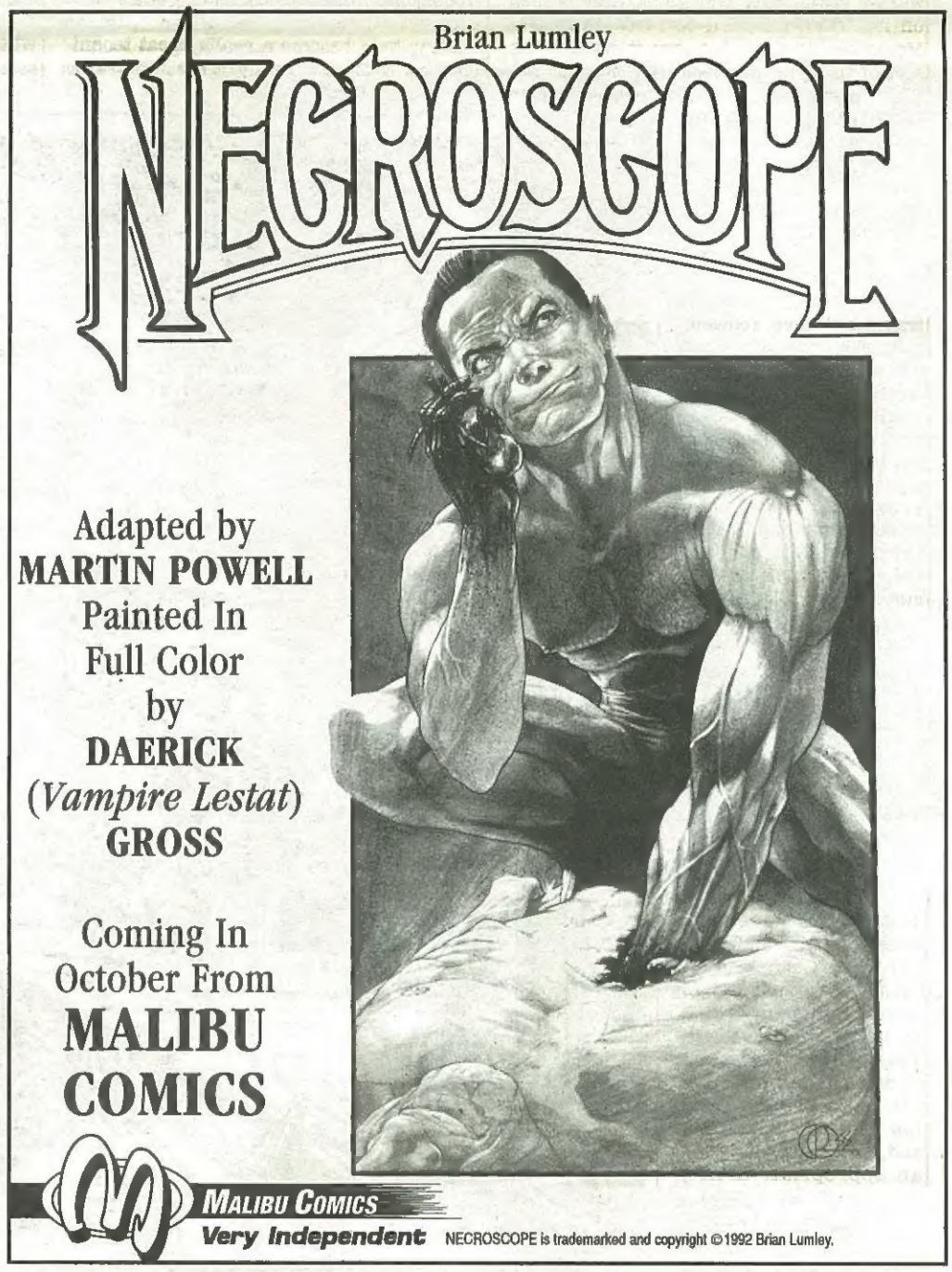


CSN PREVIEWS

Martial arts films are a sort of cinematic popcorn; no matter how many fancy flavors there are, plain and simple popcorn is ultimately the most satisfying. The same holds true for martial arts comics; the story can be so overly complicated that the martial arts seem like an intrusion rather than a *raison d'etre*. Thankfully, Mike Baron knows how to avoid that trap and keep a straightforward, plain-popcorn storyline.

*Mike Baron is one of the best writers martial arts comics has ever seen. He understands the plotting and the pacing that goes into creating a martial arts experience, and also knows the limitations and extremes that martial arts can be taken to. In other words, he can write a martial arts book without making it seem stupid. **Kato** is a very well crafted story, and would make one of the better martial arts films that I've seen.*

The art by Val Mayerick is equally up tot he task. Mayerick has a sense for making the characters movements seem natural and intentional, rather than just posed in a fighting stance. Mayerick also has the ability to render faces in such a way to convey a difference of nature before you get to the words—without using the all-purpose grimace.

I once watched Val Mayerik do a martial-arts sketch; it was obvious from the moment that the pencil touched the page that Mayerik not only knew martial arts, but that he also understood the fluid motion of the human body. Mayerik is a martial arts student himself, so he draws from experience, not from books and photo reference.

*Kato is a great action-adventure story, and in many ways it reminds me of the old **Master of Kung-Fu** book. Hey, that's twice we've been reminded of Shang-Chi—maybe it's time for him to come back. What do you say Mike? Val? Sounds good to me.*

*A few months back we told readers to go back and look at **Swamp Thing**. Writer Nancy Collins has created a whole new series of stories that are uniquely her own—not a rehash of the old Alan Moore stories or the Len Wein material, but equally as good. Well, I'm going to tell you again, and give you an incentive to boot.*

***Swamp Thing** #125 is a special issue that is designed to bring new readers into the fold, and serves as a great place for those people who have been out of the fold for a while to come back. Collins has crafted a nifty little story that tags onto the events presented in the Seasons of Mist storyline in **Sandman**. While the rulership of Hell was yet to be decided, one of Swamp Things oldest and deadliest foes escaped—Anton Arcane. Now he has come back to bring terror anew to his dear old family.*

*Collin's story is fabulous. She knows just the right amount of the macabre to add to **Swamp Thing** to make it seem alien, and then just the right amount of humanity to add to plant it firmly in reality again.*

Most horror comics would have avoided the macabre style of this story, preferring instead to give us a full comic of hero-villain slugouts and bombastic, overblown threats. Thankfully, Collins sees the fight scene as an element of the story and not vice versa...

*As an added incentive, the story in **Swamp Thing** #125 is self-contained. That's right, you don't need to have read this book before to understand what has happened, and you can decide in one issue if the new direction of the book appeals to you.*

I think most readers will agree that the increasing emphasis on the Louisiana setting is such a natural for ***Swamp Thing*** that it's a wonder that earlier writers didn't utilize it moe fully.

*Of course, the events that occur in this issue will have long lasting repercussions, but the story itself ends on the last page. How refreshing. An entire story in one issue. Do yourself a favor, if you are at all a fan of books like **Sandman, Doom Patrol**, or even **Darkhold** or **Hellraiser**, or any horror at all, pick up **Swamp Thing** #125—I think you'll be glad you did.*

Harvey is a film that portrays the interrelationship between an imaginative man and his anthropomorphic creation. ***The Mishkin File***, a one-shot by Kim and Simon Deitch, portrays a similar relationship. While ***Harvey*** is humorous and positive, however, ***The Mishkin File*** is a grim, relentless look at the emotionally dysfunctional interrelationship between its main character, Ted Mishkin, and his best-known creation, Waldo the Cat.

I've read ***The Mishkin File*** three times now, and I've enjoyed it more each time. Initially, I was captivated by the story; it's a tale of dissolution and deterioration, compellingly told. The second time around, I read the work as a *roman a clef* tale of the early days of animation, trying to pick out the reality behind the fiction. The third time, I balanced the two and focused on the character of of Ted Mishkin himself—a character at times reminiscent of a Will Eisner creation, but without the touch of redemption that Eisner adds to his characters.

*I think that you had a clearer head than I when you read **The Mishkin File**—I was seeing each aspect of the story while I was reading it the first time. That doesn't mean that I can see more broadly than you—quite the opposite in fact. There was so much happening in the book that I literally became overwhelmed at times. **The Mishkin File** was one of those rare comics that I actually had to take in, and not just superficially read. There is a lot of depth to this work, and a lot of time put into its creation.*

Kim Deitch doesn't deal with pleasantries; he focuses on flawed personalities here, showing how a weak-willed personality can become so overshadowed by its own creations that the creator fades into the shadows. At the same time, though, he manages to propel his story forward with a manic intensity reminiscent of the same 1930's cartoons that he writes about; it's as if, while he's writing about the reality behind the animation industry, he's also winking at us as if to say, "but the cartoons are real, too!"

The Mishkin File also points out the contradictions of adult reality and animation fantasy. Fans love to hear the gossip about well-known comics creators; in Ted Mishkin, Deitch has created a character who becomes almost wholly unlikeable, all the while retaining the core creative nature that makes him so dissatisfied with his life. Mishkin creates what people want, not what he wants; even so, he can't totally sanitize his work.

One of the things that helps to keep us so engrossed with the character of Ted Mishkin is the fact that we are kept on the outside; the entire story is told from third person, making it much more difficult to see inside the man's soul—to know his thoughts, and hear his problems. We never know just what it is that is happening to drive Mishkin over the edge, just what the narrator chooses to tell us. In fact, we can never quite be sure that Mishkin's so-called "obsession" with his creation isn't a total fabrication on the part of the narrator.

Absolutely true—it's very possible that Ted Mishkin is much more balanced than the narrator assumes. It also underscores the outside world's reliance on first impressions and superficial conclusions. Since this is a medium that suffers from the prejudgments of those outside the medium , it's quite possible that Ted Mishkin suffers the same sort of prejudgment.

*I think that this idea touches upon one of the things that makes **The Mishkin File** so engrossing—it's ability to create that illusion of a mix between reality and fantasy that you have already mentioned.*

The Mishkin File is one of the most aggravatingly engrossing comic book stories about the relationship of the creator and the creation that I've ever read. It deserves a far wider audience than it's likely to find...but then, that's what ***The Mishkin File*** is about...

***Dark Horse Comics** seems to have something for everyone. I don't mean the company, I mean their new anthology title, **Dark Horse Comics**. By the time you read this the first issue will have already hit the stands—but let me assure you that it is something worth picking up, and the quality continues into the second issue. Unlike many anthologies that feature only one outstanding story coupled with a collection of second rate material or simply inferior work, **Dark Horse Comics** is quality throughout. The second issue features a new Robocop story by John Arcudi, John Paul*

LISTEN! FROM NOW ON, THIS TIRED, CORNBALL STUFF IS OUT!
PERHAPS...
OMIGOD! ALEC! LOOK!
WELCOME HOME!
The Psychiatrist
FRIDAY 7:30 P.M.
and praised the courageous way in which she told McCarthy where to go.
The Mishkin File
Swamp Thing #125

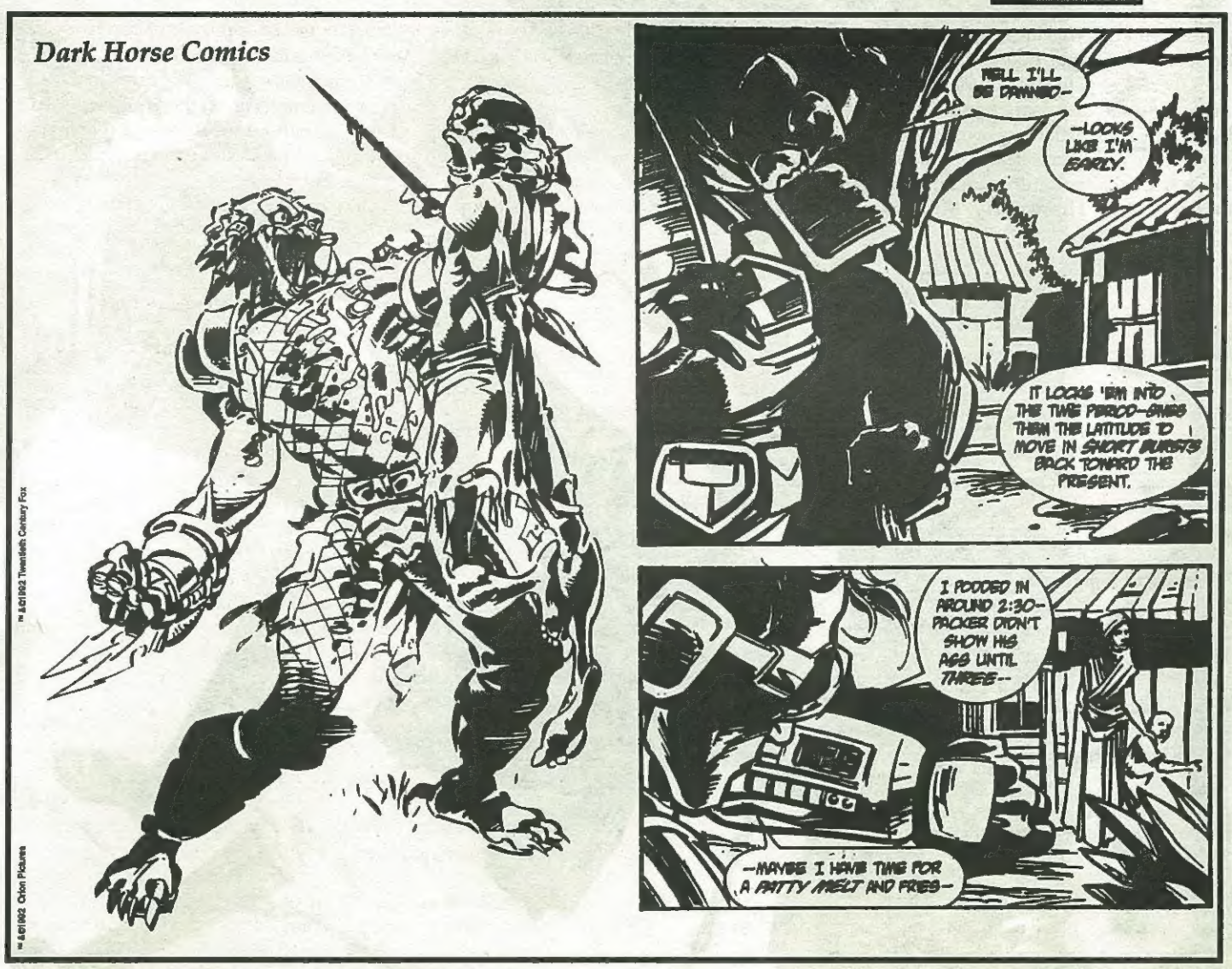
Leon, and Jeff Albrecht; a Time Cop story by Mark Verheiden, Phil Hester, and Chris Warner; and a Predator story by Ian Edginton and Rick Leonardi, and all of them are good. The best story of the bunch for me, though, was the Renegade story by Chris Claremont and Vince Giarrano.

There's been a lot of attention focused on Marvel Comics' loss of several top-notch artists; insofar as I'm concerned, though, the most devastating loss they've suffered in the past couple of years is the loss of Claremont, who has always been one of the best writers in the business. Even when Claremont was just coasting on **X-Men**, his characterization was rock-solid. When Claremont is in his prime, it's difficult for anyone to outwrite him. In "Renegade," Claremont is in his prime...

Renegade is about the invasion of a planet, and how one woman—if you can actually call her that—stops it, and she's a schoolteacher to boot. The story gives a sense of a greater overall tale waiting to be told, and I've already mentioned how I like the teaser at the beginning of a story. More than just a teaser though, Renegade works as a self-contained story that shows growth, conflict, and resolution in a very short span.

*The team of Claremont and Giaranno are the same ones that are scheduled to produce the second **Aliens vs. Predator** series later this year, and with a warm-up like this,that story is bound to please,*

And since this Renegade story will tie in to the ***Aliens Vs. Predator*** series, readers who miss out now are going to regret it later...


Dark Horse Comics
WELL I'LL BE DAMNED—
—LOOKS LIKE I'M EARLY.
IT LOCKS 'EM INTO THE TIME PERIOD—GIVES THEM THE LATITUDE TO MOVE IN SHORT BURSTS BACK TOWARD THE PRESENT.
I DODGED IN AROUND 2:30—PACKER DIDN'T SHOW HIS ASS UNTIL THREE—
—MAYBE I HAVE TIME FOR A PATTY MELT AND FRIES—
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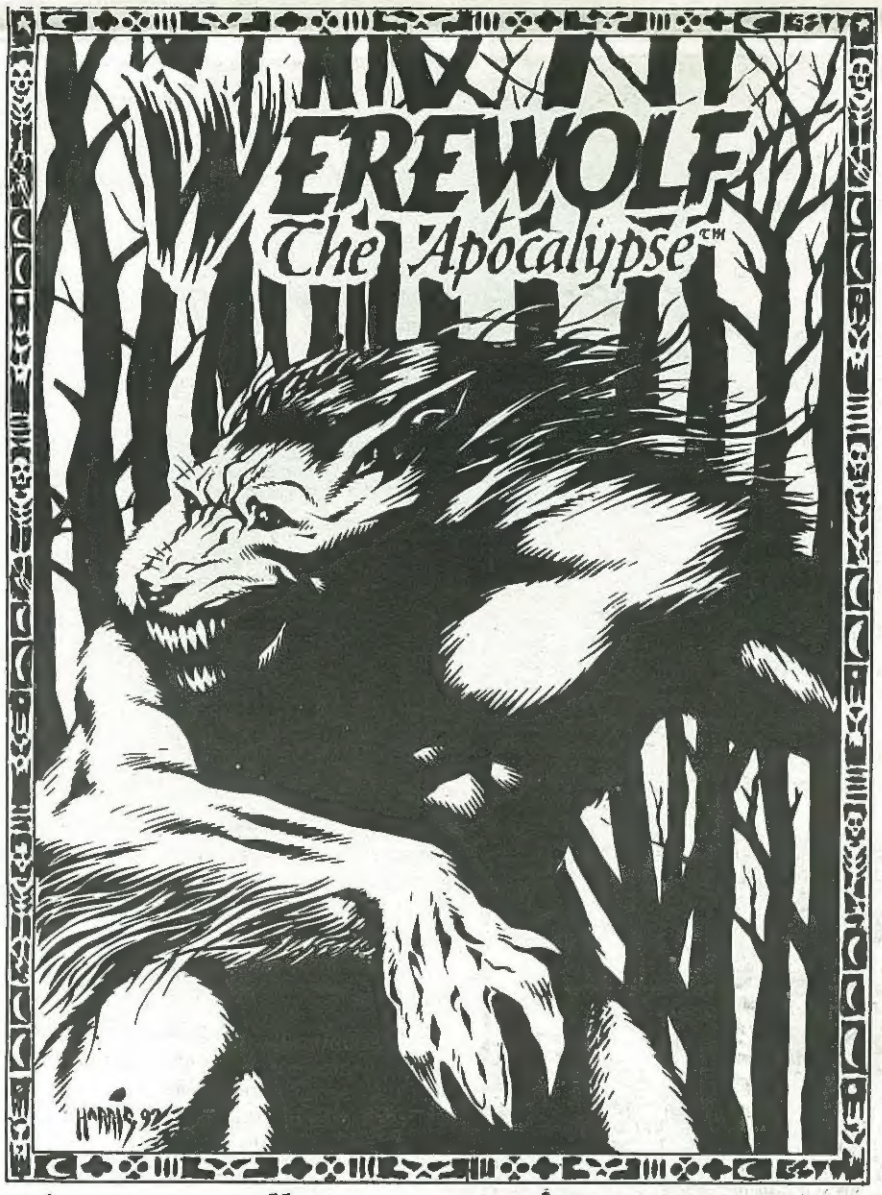

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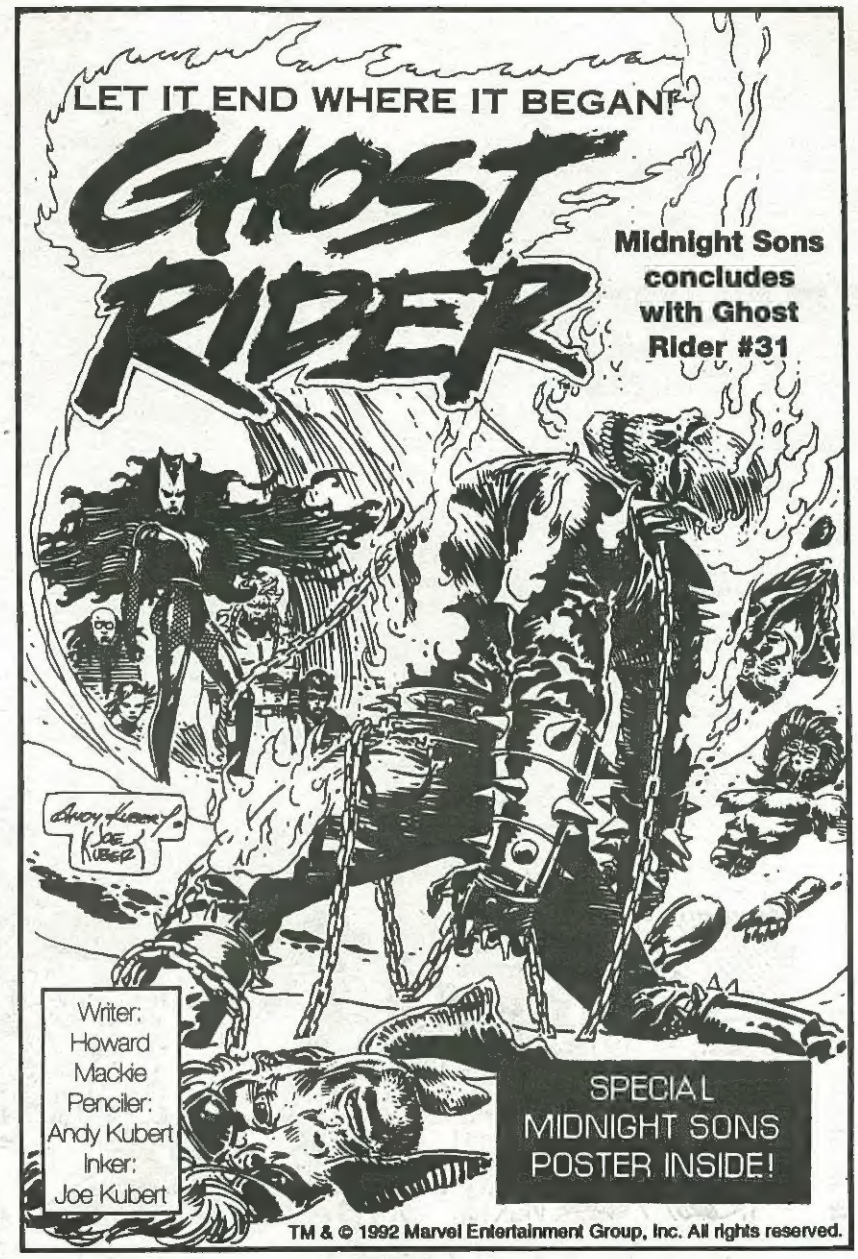
LET IT END WHERE IT BEGAN!
GHOST RIDER
Midnight Sons concludes with Ghost Rider #31
Writer: Howard Mackie
Penciler: Andy Kubert
Inker: Joe Kubert
SPECIAL MIDNIGHT SONS POSTER INSIDE!
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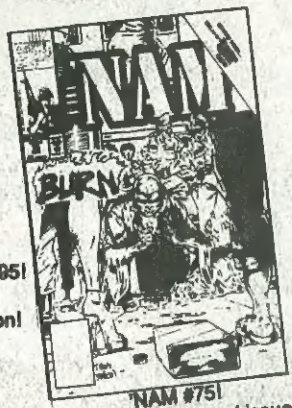

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